

Vandelhelm: Enemies and Alloys

Planet Hoppers: March 2004

By [Cory Herndon](#)

Welcome to "Planet Hoppers," where each month, we bring you a set of articles on a particular world in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* galaxy that a Gamemaster can use separately or as a linked series of events. This month's installment was forged on Vandelhelm, a key supplier of shipbuilding materials for both the Empire and the New Republic. Be sure to check back each week for a new installment.

Part 1: File Vandelhelm-LC/hsnn

In which Lando Calrissian briefs the captain of the Millennium Falcon on Vandelhelm's history and importance.

Part 2: Venerated

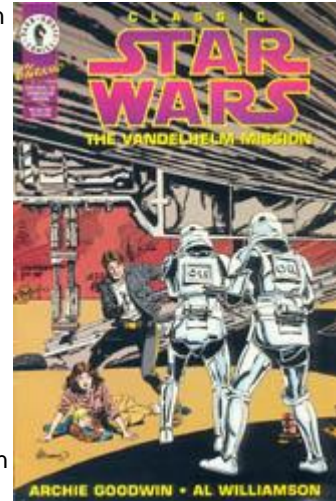
In which the Guildmistress of Vandelhelm suspects revolutionaries among the Metalsmiths, and fears her policies may be the cause.

Part 3: Solo Class

In which the Guild of Vandelhelm unveils a new freighter fleet dedicated to the man who made it all possible.

Part 4: The Demands of Supply

In which Han Solo and Nien Nunb return to Vandelhelm on a simple diplomatic mission that's sure to go smoothly.



About the Author

One-time *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* editor Cory J. Herndon is now a freelancer. Cory's work has appeared in *Amazing Stories*, *Duelist*, *TopDeck*, *Star Wars Gamer*, *Dragon*, and *SCIFI.com*. He has done additional design work on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook (primarily the Droids chapter), *The Dark Side Sourcebook* (creatures and archetypes), and the *Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game*. He is also the author of Volumes 5 and 6 of the **Magic: The Gathering Encyclopedia**. Cory's short story "Like Spider's Silk" appears in the *Secrets of Magic* Anthology. He asks that you please purchase a copy of it and the **D&D** novel *The Living Dead* for every room in your home. Cory is currently authoring original content for Xbox.com, writing the third book in an upcoming *Magic: The Gathering* novel trilogy, and continuing to design *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* material for the Wizards website.

Part 1: File Vandelhelm-LC/hsnn

By Cory J. Herndon

Some planets provide more materials for starship construction than Vandelhelm, but no world produces finer alloys and metals. Though situated roughly midway between Sullust and Yag'Dhul on the well-traveled Rimma Trade Route in the Expansion Region, the small, unassuming planet wasn't discovered until 22,000 years after the founding of the Republic. The dense world was abundant in thousands of minerals and metals that were perfect for shipbuilding, but a thick asteroid cloud surrounding the system blocked long-distance scans, and the planet's chaotic moon system made blind navigation hazardous. It wasn't until independent prospectors Vandel and Helm ventured into the system in their small exploratory vessel that the riches of the world that would be called Vandelhelm were revealed. Vandel and Helm settled the planet with their families and used the profits from their first ore exports to attract the best metalsmiths in the galaxy to form the first Guild of Metalsmiths on Vandelhelm.

Three millennia later, the superstitious Metalsmiths Guild of Vandelhelm revere the last surviving members of the two families, which long ago intermarried and became de facto hereditary royalty. The blessings of the family are so important to the metalsmiths that they may refuse to work entirely if the so-called Venerated Ones are not on Vandelhelm or disapprove of their efforts. Only during the Rebellion era did the Guild break this tradition, and then only because the Empire had taken the last two Venerated Ones hostage to ensure cooperation.

The safe return of the Venerated Ones that led to Vandelhelm's generous trade agreement with the Alliance of Free Planets (later the New Republic) was the work of General Han Solo, who nevertheless failed to watch General Calrissian's briefing holo excerpted here.

Planet: Vandelhelm
Planet Type: Terrestrial
Climate: Temperate
Terrain: Cities, deserts, mountains
Atmosphere: Breathable
Gravity: 1.2 Standard
Diameter: 8,008 km
Length of Day: 22 standard hours
Length of Year: 292 local days
Sentient Species: Humans, Sullustans, other
Language: Basic
Population: 40 million
Species Mix: Humans 90%, Sullustans 6%, assorted alien species 4%
Government: Corporate monarchy
Major Exports: Alloys, ore, sculpture
Major Imports: Foodstuffs
Region: Expansion Region
System/Star: Vandelhelm

Planets	Type	Moons
Vandelhelm	Molten rock	13
Vandelhelm Cloud	Asteroid belt	--

File Vandelhelm-LC/hsnn

I don't know why I'm bothering. I know you're not going to listen to this. In fact, I'm sort of counting on it, old buddy. If you knew exactly what was going on, you might change the plan. But just in case, you can't say I didn't give you all the information you needed.

The Vandelhelm system isn't the kind of place pirates and scoundrels like to frequent, so first, a little background. Everyone knows the best alloys come from Vandelhelm, but no one's really sure how they do it. There's an incredibly high amount of minerals and ores, but the Metalsmiths keep their methods a close secret. The important thing is that the Metalsmiths Guild controls all metal production on the planet according to the Vandel-Helm Charter, and if we're going to rebuild the fleet, we need Vandelhelm metal to do it. You'll need to start with the Guildmaster, Orrk. I only met him once when I was running Cloud City, but I don't trust him. This story about the Guild ceasing work until the Venerated Ones return seems too convenient. He might be trying to bargain with the Alliance, or maybe he's still working with the Empire. But don't take anything he says for granted.

Now about the Venerated Ones. Yeah, they're kids, but they're important kids. Venerable, even. They're going to be expecting a yacht, so maybe you could take some time during the trip there to swab the *Falcon's* deck. And you'll have to prepare for a little snootiness, but remember, they're just kids, and they've been in an Imperial prison for the last three years. I don't know -- try to charm them. Or let them talk to Nien Nunb. He's always a hit with the kids. The teenager's name is Lilli -- trust me, you'd never remember her full name -- and her little brother is Endro. They're the last living Vandelhelms. Most people'd call them a prince and a princess, I suppose, but to the Metalsmiths these kids are, well, not gods, really, but a planetwide version of the good luck charm you take to every single sabacc game. These people have been a part of the greater galaxy for three thousand years, but they still have the superstitions of a Rim world, and we'll just have to work around it. Don't worry, you still get to play the hero at the end.



You're picking Lilli and Endro up at an internment facility we just liberated on Ord Vaug. Colonel Onassi will fill you in on the rest and give you the access coordinates for a safe approach to the planet. Vandelhelm is a single planet system, but it's got one of the biggest asteroid clouds you'll ever see. There's also a complicated lunar system around the planet, but that'll be no trouble for anyone with a pair of eyes. The trajectories for a jump that'll put you inside the cloud aren't being provided to us until after we get the Venerated Ones off Ord Vaug, or you'd have them already.

You pulled this duty because you're the best pilot we've got, and the *Falcon* . . . well, it's the *Falcon*. And like I said, I don't trust Orrk. He's been working with the Imperials for over a decade, and near as I can tell, he pretty much runs the place now. The kids could be a problem for him, and he might try something along the lines of an interdicator mine field in the asteroids. Since Wedge is training new pilots, Luke's playing Jedi ambassador, Chewie's on family leave, and I'm preoccupied with important Alliance administrative duties and a major, major card game, I'm sending you with Nien Nunb.

Have fun, and bring me back a piece of Vandelhelm sculpture if you get a chance. I'm starting a collection. And please, consider reading the rest of this briefing.

Part 2: Venerated

By Cory J. Herndon

The return of the Venerated Ones to Vandelhelm led directly to that world's strong ties with the young New Republic. Without the efforts of the Guildmistress and increased shipments of shipbuilding materials, Thrawn may well have succeeded in retaking the galaxy, to say nothing of the lives saved by resources that went into medical ships and hospital facilities.

Even with the upswing in production, however, the Guild's profits reached a plateau a few years after the Venerated Ones were freed. Lillindri Nanimei Filda Vandelhelm XXXII, who was made Guildmistress at age 15 by popular vote only a day after General Solo's departure, showed a keen mind for finances. But Lilli used her power to keep prices down for the New Republic even though it meant income for the Guild remained stagnant. No Guildmaster had ever let such a situation stand for so long, and Endro, Lilli's security advisor and spokesperson, reported whispers that perhaps it was time for the Venerated One to return to her royal duties and leave the business of sales to those with more experience.

To openly and directly oppose a living member of the Vandelhelm family was unthinkable, and it's not as if the Guild was in danger of going broke. But when Lilli ordered the smiths to produce an enormous shipment of their finest alloys to go into a shipbuilding job for the Venerated One herself -- a fleet of combat-capable freighters dedicated solely to supplying the New Republic shipyards -- profits took a huge hit. Steady sales are one thing, but declining profits are another to people used to charging what they want. Still, once a Vandelhelm had made her mind up, there was little one could do to change it.

Personal Holojournal of Lillindri Nanimei Filda Vandelhelm XXXII

8th of Fenja, 3013

[Decrypted with Permission]

The Guild thinks I don't know they're unhappy. They say I won't listen. Yet when I send Endro to explain my position, I get nowhere. Freedom from the constraints the Empire imposed on them made the smiths greedy for ever more credits once the occupiers had gone. Greed is repulsive in those who already have so much. They thought giving me a tutor would just make me more likely to see things their way, but now that I really understand how this world works, I can see I have to change it. Vandelhelm has hoarded its wealth too long.

It's not as if I offered up the secrets of our smithing techniques. Just reduced the price to the right people, and cut off the wrong people. As long as there are people identifying themselves as Imperial, they don't get metal from Vandelhelm. And the Guild is so preoccupied with the short-term losses from the new fleet that they can't see how much we'll all gain in the long run. Once the *Solo* fleet is flying, it will increase our stature and our profits, and we'll still helping the New Republic while we're at it. It's not the profitable thing, but it's the right thing. It's what Han would do. What kind of leader am I if I don't follow that example?

I've been so nervous since he and Nien Nunb accepted the invitation. But everything will be fine, Endro says. He's the one who knows all of our security systems, so I have to trust he's right. He's my brother. Besides, General Solo will be there, and he wouldn't let anything happen to us.

Endro told me Han agreed not to bring the Head of State. I don't know what he sees in her. She can't possibly have time to be as close to him as they say on the sludgenews. When he sees what Vandelhelm has become since he left, he'll have to stay.

GM Notes: Lillindri Nanimei Filda Vandelhelm XXXII

The Guildmistress of Vandelhelm rarely uses her full name unless protocol demands it. Lilli is a striking brunette woman in her mid-twenties with the extensive education and stunted social skills common to many royal figures who came to power young. Reaching adulthood during the post-Endor period that led to the formation of the New Republic also gave her a strong sense of idealism. Her few respites from the business of running the Metalsmiths Guild are sculpting small abstract metal figures in the royal studio and practicing martial arts (for practical and relaxation purposes).

Lilli truly does understand her business, but she is determined to repay the debt Vandelhelm owes the new galactic government -- and especially former General Han Solo. During this time, a little more than ten years after the Battle of Endor, she is frequently accompanied by her brother Endrodanar Tiopuld Shaamador Vandelhelm XXIV and an utterly loyal modified protocol droid that Endro has programmed to be her bodyguard. Though barely an adult himself, Endro has an intuitive knowledge of technology, and he helps his sister manage both personal and planetary security. He is also the Guildmistress's liaison to the industrial concerns that keep Vandelhelm's atmosphere from becoming toxic. Both Venerated Ones go armed at all times, according to tradition.



Lilli: Human Female Noble 9; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 20 (+5 class, +3 Dex, +2 Defensive Martial Arts); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 34/11; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6 +1, unarmed strike) or 9/+4 ranged (3d6+2, Guildmaster's blaster pistol); SQ bonus class skill (Escape Artist), coordinate +2, favor +3, inspire confidence, resource access; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +6; SZ M; FP 5; DSP 0; Rep +6; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 15; Challenge Code D.

Equipment: Expensive clothing, Guildmaster's blaster pistol (damage +2), numerous luxury starships and speeders, worn-out hydrospanner (lucky charm, a keepsake from the *Millennium Falcon*).

Skills: Appraise +15, Computer Use +15, Craft (metal sculpture) +14, Diplomacy +13, Escape Artist +14, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (business) +18, Knowledge (chemistry) +18, Knowledge (politics) +18, Knowledge (Vandelhelm) +18, Profession (Guildmistress) +11, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Speak Sullustan, Speak Ancient Corellian, Sense Motive +11.

Feats: Defensive Martial Arts, Fame, Influence, Martial Arts, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [business]), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [politics]), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Vandelhelm]), Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Part 3: Solo Class

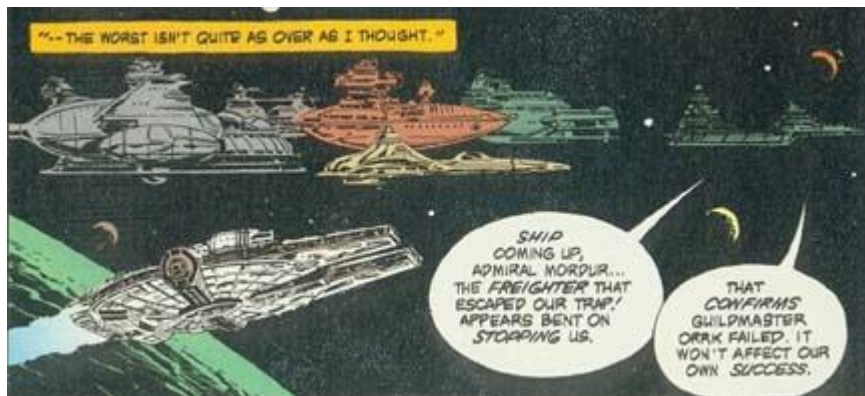
By Cory J. Herndon

The demands of governing a galaxy after toppling the Emperor and fighting an ongoing battle against those who would replace him once again put a strain on New Republic supply lines. To help her friends in the New Republic, the Guildmistress of Vandelhelm ordered the design of a new class of freighter. These expensive ships, larger than the old drone barges that carried most of the planet's alloys into the galactic marketplace, were heavily outfitted for combat operations. They would form a fleet dedicated to maintaining the New Republic's shipyards with building materials even when at war.

Many thought the ships a waste of credits, but it's obvious from the script of this Republic Engineering Corporation/SoroSuub promotional holo that the mighty vessels' designers were justifiably proud of their work. Though the initial order from the Fondor shipyards was solely a gift for the New Republic, the shipbuilders saw potential for a broader market that wanted to move large quantities of anything through perilous territory and look good doing it.

A Revolution in Armored Transports

The galaxy can be a dangerous place, especially for legitimate shipping traffic that comes under fire. To ensure the security of the galaxy, the Republic Engineering Corporation and SoroSuub, working in conjunction with the Fondor Independent Shipyards under contract from the Metalsmiths Guild of Vandelhelm, proudly presents the *Solo*-class combat freighter.



Large enough to carry the cargo of a half-dozen drone barges, the *Solo* isn't just a sleek overhaul of the freighter concept with a few extra weapons and shielding added. It's a reinvention of what the freighter can and should be in these still unstable times. The completely original design draws on elements of the shipbuilding renaissance of that late Old Republic period, when style as well as function shared equal billing. The structure of each ship is reinforced with the finest lightweight plasteel made according to ancient secrets handed down for thousands of years on Vandelhelm itself. Each hull is covered in two layers of the same superhard titanium plating that forms the keel, and protects your ship and its valuable contents even when shields fail.

Of course, shield failure is almost certain never to take place. The *Solo*-class combat freighter earns its martial appellation with six ball-mounted dual turbolaser cannons, three to port and three to starboard, that offer a full 360 degrees of coverage. If that's not enough to repel pirates or get through a combat zone safely, two missile batteries are mounted fore and aft.

Don't let the *Solo*'s size fool you -- this big bird is fully atmospheric-flight rated, saving days of slow travel using orbital tugs and sparing you costly delays. Upgrade to the *Solo* class combat freighter and kiss your YT good-bye.

Available soon, pending the unveiling ceremony on Vandelhelm. To witness the launch of the new freighter fleet, contact your local representative from the Guild of Metalsmiths. For an optional complement of droid maintenance crews, add 8 percent to total cost. Requires full starport facilities for service.

GM Notes: *Solo*-Class Combat Freighter

Considering the demands placed on its design team, the *Solo* performs the dual role of combat vessel and cargo ship remarkably well. Similar in basic size and shape to the transport vessels used by the old Rebel Alliance as troop haulers, the combat freighter is capable of carrying half again as much cargo without difficulty. In truth, they are over-gunned. Though Fondor Shipyards has not advertised the fact, this is so they can serve as fleet support ships for the New Republic or planetary defense forces at the request of the Guildmistress.

Craft: *Solo*-Class Combat Freighter

Class: Space Transport

Size: Medium-size (96.5 m long)

Hyperdrive: x 2

Passengers: 10 (cargo bay full) 100 (cargo bay empty)

Cargo Capacity: 22,000 tons

Consumables: 1 year

Cost: 700,000 (new), 500,000 (used)

Maximum Speed in Space: Cruising (4 squares per action, cargo bay full) or Attack (5 squares per action, cargo bay empty)

Atmospheric Speed: 800 km/h

Crew: 6 (skilled +4)

Initiative: +4 (+0 size, +4 crew)

Maneuver: +4 (+0 size, +10 crew)

Defense: 30 (+0 size, +20 armor)

Shield Points: 200 (DR 20)

Hull Points: 250 (DR 25)

Weapon: Dual turbolaser cannons (6); **Fire Arc:** turret (3 port, 3 starboard); **Attack Bonus:** +14 (+0 size, +4 crew, +10 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10 x 2; **Range Modifiers:** PB -2, S/M +0, L -2.

Weapon: Concussion missile launchers (2) (6 missiles each); **Fire Arc:** 1 front, 1 rear; **Damage:** 8d10 x 2; **Missile Quality:** Ordinary (+10).

Part 4: The Demands of Supply

By Cory J. Herndon

On the tenth anniversary of the Venerated Ones' triumphant return to Vandelhelm, the world celebrated a decade of alliance with the New Republic with the inaugural launch of the so-called "Solo Fleet" loaded with quality alloys, valuable metals, construction materials, and treasured Vandelhelm sculptures bound for Fondor. Though it required more than a little arm-twisting in the case of both parties, Han Solo and Nien Nunb accepted an invitation to return to Vandelhelm and take honorary possession of the fleet in an elaborate ceremony.

According to multiple complaints C-3PO filed with the New Republic Head of State at the time, Chewbacca threatened to disarm the droid Wookiee-style when he pointed out that protocol called for only Solo and Nien Nunb to attend. The Corellian eventually convinced Chewie to take a vacation on Kashyyyk instead, but not before Threepio panic-vented most of his lubricant supply.

Personal Log of Nien Nunb, Administrator, Kessel Spice Mines

Translated from the Sullustan

Calrissian owes me my own combat freighter for this. As if it's not bad enough constantly hearing about how he and Antilles took out the second Death Star on their own -- with no help from the tall, dashing Sullustan who had to remind the frazzled general of the correct missile launch code when he blanked. Where's my statue, eh? And who saved the Venerated Ones on Vandelhelm ten years ago? Who went back inside the smelly confines of the *Millennium Falcon* for a blaster while Solo was jabbering his Corellian mouth off? Nien Nunb, that's who.

Now I've got to get back into that flying heap and go all the way to Vandel-spitting-helm. With Solo. Again. I'm sorry, I just don't see the guy's appeal. He never stops talking long enough to listen to anything. And I'm pretty sure he just pretends to understand Sullustan. I'm a good conversationalist, blast it. But half the time he just nods, then goes on about whatever he was yammering about.

And that ship. I expected to die in that ship once. The flight to Vandelhelm made me wish I had. What does the Head of State see in him?

We arrived on the same landing platform where we'd been ambushed ten years ago. The platform had been greatly expanded into a spaceport dedicated to the *Solo* fleet (Solo. Fleet. I'm getting a headache just thinking about it.) The old platform had been left more or less alone, though. Vandelhelm tradition.

It was supposed to be fairly quick. We land, step out to accolades, I keep myself from knocking that grin off of Solo's face, we attend a banquet, then the next day (mercifully, I had my own suite in the Vandelhelm Guildhouse) we hit another banquet, then attend the launch ceremony, say our goodbyes, and escort the fleet to Fondor, where I book passage back to Kessel. Assuming the place hasn't fallen apart in my absence.



The first day all went according to plan. I was somewhat gratified to see Solo didn't enjoy the adoration of the crowd well. He looked like he wanted to slink into a smuggling compartment in his ship. But that was nothing next to his discomfort after the Guildmistress greeted him with a hug and whispered something in his ear. He actually jumped back like the woman had offered him a back full of angry mynocks. Whatever she'd said, the Guildmistress wasn't happy about his reaction, but she, unlike Solo, managed to keep some composure.

No, the trouble came on the next day, of course. There we are -- me, Solo, the Venerated Ones all grown up, an armed protocol droid, and a dozen massive transports. Alone. According to tradition, not even Solo and I should have been there, but the Guildmistress had insisted. Huge holopanel had been erected to display the scene to the population. I think every one of them showed up, too, and without bathing. The sheer number of Humans in one place, on a world that had to artificially manufacture extra oxygen in the first place, smelled even worse than the Wookiee-fur aroma in Solo's ship.

As the Guildmistress, who was crying, I think, handed the control codes for the freighters over to Solo (guess who got to stand by and watch again?), the damned protocol droid went insane. Its blaster cannon would have taken Solo's head clean off if I hadn't noticed in time and shoved him out of the way, which I'd been almost ready to do just on general principle. Solo and the Guildmistress went down in a tangle of arms, and I rolled forward and knocked the droid's feet out from under it. We struggled, the droid and I, with Solo ignoring my calls for him to get off the girl and help me. Finally, I shoved the barrel of the droid's own blaster into its neck and managed to make it pull the trigger.

When the smoke cleared, there was Solo, standing like some kind of general in the center of the old launch platform. He was holding up the Guildmistress' younger brother by the lapels. The kid's head was lolling around, blood running from his nose. It looked like the kid had gotten in a few good shots at Solo, though. The Corellian had a fat lip and the beginnings of a black eye on his soft Human flesh.

It seems all the trouble the Guildmistress had been hearing about, something about a plot within the Guild to replace her, was all the work of Endro. He'd hoped to blame me for tinkering with the droid in the name of "Sullustan rights." Finally, I get singled out, and it's as a *patsy*, for Sith's sake. Then he would have taken over the Guild as the last remaining Venerated One and sold the *Solo* fleet to some Hutts, or the Empire, or some warlord somewhere for twice what the Republic is paying. I could have told them the kid was trouble, if anyone had asked. The kid hadn't looked me in the eye since we landed, but he could hardly stop himself from glancing at that droid every minute. It was obvious, really. He was creepy when he was a kid, too.

We're heading back at the head of the freighter fleet, so I guess it worked out. This is the last free job I do for the New Republic, though. Of course, Solo can't stop talking about how he saved the day. Never mind that he wouldn't have a mouth to shoot off if I hadn't stopped it from getting, well, shot off. It seems the attack didn't just get him out of having to play diplomat, it also solved whatever problem he'd had with the Guildmistress the day before. Not that I care.

At least Solo and I agree on one thing. It's good to be going home. Even if I'll be airing Wookiee odor from my clothes for the rest of the week. Yeah, Calrissian owes us both, and Solo owes me even more. Maybe not a ship. Maybe just some peace.

Supply and Demand



Issue 98 of Marvel's *Star Wars* comic saw the return of long-time scribe Archie Goodwin and artist Al Williamson, who introduced us to the planet Vandelhelm. The creators of the long-running *Star Wars* newspaper strip and adaptors of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* (among other landmarks) came up with a tale so true to *Star Wars* and the Han Solo character -- with crackling Goodwin dialog and beautifully realistic art -- that current *Star Wars* comic publisher Dark Horse reprinted the story not only in *A Long Time Ago . . . Vol. 7* but also back in 1995 as *Classic Star Wars: The Vandelhelm Mission*. That's three places to read the tale, so be sure to check it out.